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Sustainable Approaches for Sustainable Management of African Smallholder Farmer

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Abstract

Agriculture accounts for 30 to 40 % of total Gross domestic product in Africa, and a majority of the continent's population is employed in the sector. In Africa, there are 33 million of smallholder farms. Although agriculture is viewed as a viable activity for rural development for the developing economies, Smallholder farming (i.e. farms which are smaller than five hectares) is the dominant type of agricultural practice, especially in the Sub-Saharan Africa. Smallholder farming as been highlighted as important for rural development, sustained rural livelihoods and an improved economy. However, smallholder farming is faced with a number of challenges which often lead to unsustainable management of their business, which includes, but is not limited to: Low infrastructure, low level of technical skills, low access to finance, land fragmentation, poor value chain links, high post harvest losses, drudgery and low level of technology, climate variability, lack of reliable markets, lack of access to information and a lot more. The following were the suggested approaches and solutions to a sustainable management of the smallholders African farms: extensive trainings on sustainable management for Youths and women in Agriculture, Innovation and use of affordable modern technologies e.g. the use of mobile app for advertisements, digitalisation, Adequate use of the different form of contract farming to ensure a ready market and Creating of a functional cooperative group of smallholder farmers, adoption of different methods of reducing post harvest losses, removing regulatory barriers that inhibit farmers from adopting digital tools, investing in reskilling and upskilling programmes focused on small farms.

Keywords: Agriculture, digitalisation, Sustainability